



January 2, 2015

The Seward Alaska Charterboat Association has been representing the local charter fishing fleet since 1996. We currently have 21 member businesses with a total of 41 boats operation from Seward.

After lengthy discussion, our association's executive committee has directed me to write a letter in strong support of Sam Cotten for a permanent position as Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game. While serving on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council Mr. Cotten always looked out for Alaskans and Alaskan fisherman. He has been very approachable and clear about what he was and was not willing to support. This kind of clear, and direct leadership is what we need in a Commissioner of this Department.

In short we would rather have someone who was fair but with the character and experience to tell us the State's position on our issues, so that we can know how to proceed in conducting our business, with a clear and transparent path.

Since working as the acting commissioner, Mr. Cotten has very willing to work with the charter sector in finding creative solutions to managing our harvest within our allocation. It might be easier to just make some deep cuts in our bag limit but instead he listened to the will of our industry and allowed us to choose our method of catch reduction. This is exactly the kind of resource management that Alaska is famous for.

We feel that Mr. Cotten is simply the best man for the job. He prior experience in public service, commercial fishing, recreational fishing and his long history as an advocate for Alaska Natives, coastal communities, and Alaskan commercial fishermen, makes him our top choice for the job.

Sincerely,

Andy Mezirow
Past President and policy advisory
Seward Alaska Charterboat Association

